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## **Sen. Gilbert's reverse 911 legislation sent to governor**

**LANSING** – A 911 service district would be able to notify local residents of impending danger using a telephone emergency notification system under legislation sent to the governor for signing today, announced Sen. Jud Gilbert, R-Algonac.

“It’s important that residents be warned of potential life-threatening emergencies in their communities such as a natural disaster or terrorist attack,” said Gilbert, sponsor of the bill. “Signing this bill into law will provide additional safeguards for the residents of Michigan.”

Senate Bill 1267 allows for telecommunications providers to supply all 911 service districts within their coverage areas with telephone number data for each customer in the district. Reverse 911 would allow emergency service responders to use the telephone numbers to contact residents regarding an imminent danger or crisis that may affect their health, safety or welfare.

The local 911 agency would be able to program the numbers into an automatic dialer that would reach many residents at one time. Several states already have similar notification systems.

Additionally, emergency and law enforcement personnel would be allowed to access this information to perform a reverse trace in emergency situations when there is a threat to an individual or greater public safety.

“We have the technology in place to use this as a means of notifying citizens during an emergency,” said Jeff Friedland, emergency management coordinator for St. Clair County. “This bill takes us from the concept stage to reality.”

The legislation clearly stipulates that the information is only to be used for emergency purposes and includes criminal penalties for improper use of the provided telephone numbers and other data. It also limits how often a service district can request an updated subscriber list, no more than once a month, to prevent an unnecessary burden on the phone companies.

“I’m pleased to have been able to lend a hand to the emergency management community,” Gilbert said. “Now more than ever, they need every possible tool at their disposal to keep our residents safe.”

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